

BARNSTABLE COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES
In the Year Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-Four

Resolution 94-7

WHEREAS, The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has prepared a proposal to create the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge in Barnstable County, Massachusetts;

WHEREAS, For over twenty years, many groups have been working to protect the outstanding natural resource values of the Waquoit Bay, its watershed and its estuarine system. The Towns of Mashpee and Falmouth have actively pursued the conservation of critical open space areas, and defined a series of linked corridors requiring protection through purchase, donation, regulations, and partnerships. The opportunity exists for the Service to participate in a cooperative protection effort with the Towns of Mashpee and Falmouth, Massachusetts, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, and other major landowners within the boundary;

WHEREAS, The Service will use a draft environmental assessment to select a resource protection alternative and the Service will hold Open House style meetings;

WHEREAS, The importance of the Waquoit Bay, its tributaries, and watershed area has been long recognized by the Towns of Mashpee and Falmouth, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, conservation groups and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe;

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) jointly established the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Falmouth and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service), "Northeast Coastal Area Study" identified the Waquoit Bay watershed as a significant coastal habitat;

WHEREAS, The Service recognizes previous land use patterns and private land stewardship as having maintained the unique fish and wildlife values of the proposed refuge area in the past. However, increasing development has threatened the integrity of the watershed;

WHEREAS, Protection of the important habitats within the Waquoit Bay watershed will require a cooperative effort involving the participation of the State of Massachusetts, the Towns of Mashpee and Falmouth, private landowners, conservation organizations and the Service; and

WHEREAS, Section 6.1 Goal of the Regional Policy Plan for Barnstable County is to preserve and enhance the availability of open space on Cape Cod in order to provide wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, and protect the natural resources, scenery, and character of Cape Cod.

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates supports:

Preferred Protection Effort - Protection through a cooperative effort on approximately 5,596 acres. This alternative incorporates the entire water shed of Waquoit Bay. This would allow the Service to purchase land, accept donations and negotiate less-than-fee interests (conservation easements and management agreements) with interested landowners. Inclusion of the lands owned by the town, state and private conservation groups within this area would allow the Service to negotiate management agreements with these groups for cooperative management practices.

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates by a majority vote with Delegates representing 61.89% of the population of Barnstable County present and voting at a meeting held on November 2, 1994.

Attested by:



Diane C. Thompson, Clerk
Assembly of Delegates

The foregoing Resolution was endorsed by the Barnstable County Board of County Commissioners, November 9, 1994.

